



**Parks and Recreation Department Board
Minutes**

**August 28, 2001
Regular Meeting**

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department Board was held on Tuesday, August 28, 2001 in the Board Room of the Parks and Recreation Department Main Office located at 200 South Lamar Blvd., Austin, Texas.

Board Members Present: Rosemary Castleberry, Jeff Francell, Jeb Boyt, Rhonda Taylor, Rocky Medrano, Mary Ruth Holder, and Clint Small

Board Members Absent: Amy Babich

Staff Members Present: Jesus M. Olivares, Kimberley Jamail Mitchell, Jay Stone, Stacie Talbert, Sarah Campbell and Dina Haines

A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m. by Rosemary Castleberry, Chair.

B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES August 14, 2001 meeting. **Board Member Medrano** made the motion to approve the minutes as written. **Board Member Francell** seconded the motion. **The Board was in favor 6-0-0.**

C. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Scott Johnson spoke to the board regarding an idea he would like to suggest to Austin Energy. Mr. Johnson's idea consists of a utility bill proposal, which could give the citizens of Austin the option to donate money through a 'pledge system' to parks, libraries and other enhancement funds which could benefit from the citizens generosity.

D. PRESENTATION

Sarah Campbell, Senior Planner with the PARD planning department gave a presentation on the evolution of the Neighborhood Planning process. She provided copies of several neighborhood plans and explained which city departments assisted various communities with applying for planning assistance. The Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department currently works with citizens to develop draft plans along with other city departments before the final plans go before City Council for final approval.

E. PUBLIC HEARING

Gondola Concept Concession

Jay Stone, Finance Manager for Parks and Recreation Department informed the board of two proposed concessions, Gondola on Town Lake and a Golf Driving Range in north Austin. Mr. Stone informed the board that once the Gondola Concept is approved and recommended to the Director, the PARD finance department would start the process of an RFP (Request for Proposal) to be submitted out for bids.

Board Member Boyt arrives at 7:11 p.m.

Paul Parma, Owner, Venetian Passage gave a brief presentation to the board regarding his proposal for his company to provide Austin with two gondolas for the Town Lake concession. Mr. Parma stated this concession has a great marketing appeal to Austin citizens as well as tourists visiting the city.

Venessa Ronsonette, sent a fax in support on the Gondola Concept Concession.

Tom Harvey, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, spoke to the board in support of the gondola concession. Mr. Harvey stated Mr. Parma's unique training in the art of navigating a gondola is true to his commitment to the concession. Mr. Parma traveled to Venice to learn the art.

Julia Fitch, Downtown Austin Alliance spoke to the board in support of the gondola concept.

Dorothy M. Ruhl spoke in support of the gondola concession with certain recommendations related to safety. Ms. Ruhl expressed concerns that the operator should be certified with a Red Cross Licensing Certificate. The gondola should also contain floatation devices as well as a cell phone to be in contact with the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA). She also stated that the gondola should not operate during storms and lighting and the lowering of Town Lake when water levels are lowered to kill the duck weed vegetation. **Mr. Stone** addressed her concerns by stating the concession would follow all other water concession contracts and that a personal floating device (PFD) would be required. He also stated the department would also require documentation of water safety certification and well as resumes of proposed employees to man the gondolas.

GOLF DRIVING RANGE, NORTH AUSTIN

Robert Oler, Business Owner, Instant Replay Golf spoke to board on his concern for the proposed concession, Golf Driving Range. Mr. Oler's concern was whether the Parks department had notified citizens by mail around the surrounding properties of the proposed concession. He was also concerned with the lighting of the range at night. **Mr. Stone** addressed the lighting concern stating the lights would be on during hours of

operation. Mr. Oler requested the department contact Continental Homes, a development near the property to inform them of the project. He also asked Mr. Stone to follow up with the City Manager of Pflugerville on the proposed project. Mr. Oler stated the city of Pflugerville had wanted to purchase the property for ballfields. Mr. Oler was in opposition to the Golf Driving Range. He asked that the board please consider his requests before taking action.

F. ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. Make a Recommendation to the Director Regarding Gondola Concession Concept on Town Lake.

Board Member Francell made the motion to recommend to the Director to take the next steps to pursue a RFP (Request for Proposal) on a gondola concession on Town Lake. **Board Member Small** seconded the motion. **The motion passed in favor 7-0-0.**

2. Make a Recommendation to the Director Regarding Golf Driving Range Concept in North Austin.

Board Member Small stated he would prefer this item be brought back before he would feel comfortable in making a recommendation.

Jesus Olivares stated this item could come back after board members have made a recommendation to PARD staff to contact the Pflugerville City Manager and the surrounding neighborhoods. Mr. Olivares explained that the department would not want to pursue the project if there was negative reaction to the concession. The department would like to make sure that everyone is in support and that the concessionaire would receive a positive response.

Bud Morgan spoke to the board members regarding his proposed golf driving range concession concept. He stated he had been in contact with the assistant city manager of Pflugerville and which ACM stated that Pflugerville was interested in purchasing the land. In 15 years nothing has been proposed and Mr. Morgan felt the city of Pflugerville was no longer interested in the land. Mr. Morgan also stated that currently in the vicinity of the proposed land there is a cement company, an auto body shop, warehouses and industrial development.

Board Member Francell stated he wouldn't want to hold up the process for the City of Pflugerville and he feels that the proposed piece of parkland would be an appropriate site for this project.

Board Member Taylor also stated that she had concerns about the neighborhood. She stated that information about the concession should be provided to the developers of homes in the vicinity to communicate to potential buyers that this will be in their neighborhood.

Board Member Francell made the motion to recommend to the Director to begin the RFP process with the Golf Course Driving Range concession on this property after discussing the issue with any new home development companies in the area and the City of Pflugerville and the documenting of zoning around the property. **Board Member Holder** seconded the motion. **The motion passed in favor 7-0-0.**

G. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jesus M. Olivares informed the board that Roy G. Guerrero Colorado Park renaming ceremony was a great success. He also informed the board that the re-naming of Northwest District Park would be Friday, September 14, 2001. He also invited board members to various department co-sponsored events on the September 14 weekend. Auditorium Shores will have the KLBj-annual concert, "Sure Thang", Sunday, September 16, 2001, a boxing tournament will be held at A.B.Cantu/Pan Am Recreation Center from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and at Plaza Saltillo there will be the Deiz Seiz de September festival (Saturday, September 15). Mr. Olivares also informed the members Red Bud Isle would be re-opened with a ribbon cutting ceremony, September 29, 2001.

H. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Programs Committee

Board Member Medrano informed the board of a draft ordinance being drafted by the city law department concerning Local Standards of Care for the Parks and Recreation Department Programs for Children. This ordinance will require a Public Hearing.

Land and Facilities Committee

None – Land and Facilities, August 21, 2001 meeting was cancelled.

Navigation Committee

Board Member Holder informed the member of a pending matter being discussed by our City Law Department. Another boat dock will be coming to the board with a variance request.

Bond Oversight Committee

Board Chair Castleberry informed the board the committee had finished their letter to City Council Members concerning the requested CIP Projects for next year 2002.

I. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Board Member Francell inquired if it was possible to install an electronic eye to count pedestrians using Pfluger Bridge.

Board Member Taylor informed the board she is now **Ms. Pratt**.

Board Member Holder discussed the progress being made on a survey being developed by the Task Force reviewing the City's Boards and Commissions System and that the Parks Board may be used as a pilot board for this survey.

- J.** The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:42 p.m.